

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 09TRIPOLI950, LIBYAN HEU SHIPMENT SECURE; NO DECISION YET REGARDING NEXT

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09TRIPOLI950**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09TRIPOLI950	2009-12-07 16:14	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Tripoli

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2011/04/07/111761/wikileaks-cables-show-us-took.html>

VZCZCXRO9590
OO RUEHTRO
DE RUEHTRO #0950/01 3411614
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 071614Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5524
INFO RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA IMMEDIATE 0088
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 0103
RHMFISS/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 6074

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TRIPOLI 000950

NOFORN
SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/FO AND NEA/MAG.

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/7/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [RS](#) [KGIC](#) [KNNP](#) [KRAD](#) [ENRG](#) [LY](#)

SUBJECT: LIBYAN HEU SHIPMENT SECURE; NO DECISION YET REGARDING NEXT STEPS

REF: A) TRIPOLI 938; B) TRIPOLI 941

CLASSIFIED BY: Joan A. Polaschik, Charge d'Affaires, U.S.
Embassy Tripoli, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: Visiting DOE experts confirmed December 6 that the Libyan Government had taken the requisite steps to increase the security of the seven casks of HEU, and that the contents -- and IAEA seals -- remained unchanged since the shipment was halted November 25. The Libyan Government has not yet provided guidance to its nuclear scientists regarding next steps on the shipment, but Libyan scientists are developing contingency plans to remove the HEU from the casks in Libya in the event the casks must be returned empty to Russia. DOE experts estimate that Libyan approval must be received by December 10 in order for the shipment to be completed by the end of December. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXX We continue to underscore with Libyan officials the need to resolve this issue. End summary.

HEU CASKS SECURE, UNCHANGED

¶2. (S/NF) Visiting DOE experts confirmed December 6 that the Libyan Government had taken the requisite steps to increase security at the Tajura Nuclear Facility, and that the seven casks of highly enriched uranium (HEU) appeared to have remained unchanged since the planned shipment to Russia was halted on November 25 (ref a). The DOE experts reported a visible increase in the number of armed guards surrounding the facility. They also confirmed that Tajura staff had disengaged the crane within the facility and had assured the team that a new, unassembled crane would not be built until after the shipment had taken place. DOE's measurements of the spent fuel within the casks determined that the content had remained unchanged. Likewise, the IAEA seals on each cask remained in place and uncompromised.

NO DECISIONS

¶3. (S/NF) The DOE team also reported that Libyan technical specialists at Tajura had not yet received guidance from the Libyan Government on next steps regarding the shipment. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXX The team also reported that although the Libyan Government had sent the Russian Government a diplomatic note confirming that the GOL would complete its contract to return the casks to Russia by the end of the calendar year, the note did not specify whether the casks would be returned empty or with the HEU spent fuel shipment. The DOE team assessed the diplomatic note as an attempt to mollify Russian demands that the casks be returned.

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

¶4. (S/NF) The DOE team estimated that the GOL must give its approval to move forward on the shipment by December 10 in order for the shipment to take place by the end of December. The DOE experts emphasized that significant lead time is required in order set up the necessary logistical arrangements, permits and overflight clearances for the specialized Russian plane to return to Tripoli and transport the HEU to Russia.

¶5. (S/NF) The DOE team reported that Russian engineers had begun to design a remote-controlled grapple to be used in the event that the HEU spent fuel must be off-loaded from the casks in Libya. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX told the DOE experts that, if GOL approval for the shipment was not forthcoming by December 10, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX planned to start training on how to use the grapple to off-load the casks. (According to DOE experts, spent nuclear fuel has never been removed from casks for restorage; the removal of the spent fuel in Libya would be an unprecedented initiative.) DOE experts also commented that the return of the empty casks to Russia, if necessary, would be best done by boat and said they are developing contingency plans for that scenario.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM THE SECRETARY'S CALL

¶6. (S/NF) Separately, emboffs have attempted to seek clarification of the Libyan Government's next steps regarding

the HEU shipment. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX told Pol/Econ Chief that the Secretary's
December 3 call to Libyan Foreign Minister Musa Kusa had
expressed the statement of commitment requested by Saif during

TRIPOLI 00000950 002 OF 002

his recent meeting with the Ambassador (ref b), and that Kusa
had passed the message to the "highest levels" of the Libyan
Government. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX emphasized that Saif had made a "commitment"
to the Ambassador to ensure that the HEU shipment would be
approved by the Libyan Government, and "Saif will follow-through
on that commitment." XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX said Kusa intended to call the
Secretary within the "coming days" in order to personally assure
her that the GOL had approved the shipment. Emboffs also
briefed Ahmed and MFA officials on the requisite timeline and
lengthy logistical preparations needed to ensure the spent
fuel's transfer to Russia by the end of the year.

COMMENT

17. (S/NF) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX comments indicate that the Secretary's
message to Kusa was positively received. A flurry of phone
calls between DOE and Libyan experts today also indicated that
working-level Libyan officials are seeking more time to resolve
the issue, as the Libyans successfully convinced the DOE experts
to extend the deadline for a Libyan decision by two days, to
December 10 (the initial deadline proposed by DOE was December
8). At this point, we are interpreting the Libyan experts'
technical preparations for a possible unloading of the casks in
Libya as the contingency planning required to address the very
real safety and security concerns raised by the halted shipment.
We will reassess that view on December 10, and will continue to
underscore with Libyan officials the need for a resolution of
the issue this week.
POLASCHIK